

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendment and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-37 and 39-41 are pending. Claim 38 is canceled. Claims 1-4, 22, 25, 32, 39, and 41 are amended. Support for the amendment to Claim 1 can be found in now-canceled dependent Claim 38 inasmuch as Claim 1 is amended in view of the indication of allowable subject matter. Claims 2-4, 22, 25, 32, and 41 are amended to be in independent form. Claim 39 is amended to update its dependency in view of the amendment to Claim 1 and the cancellation of Claim 38. The specification is amended to correct minor typographical errors. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 16, and 19-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Maitra (U.S. Patent No. 4,037,648, herein “Maitra”). Claims 17 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Thompson (U.S. Patent No. 4,124,068, herein “Thompson”). Claims 2-15 and 22-41 were indicated as reciting allowable subject matter.

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that Claims 2-15 and 21-41 recite allowable subject matter.

Regarding the rejection of Claims 1, 16, and 19-21 as anticipated by Maitra, and the rejection of Claims 17 and 18 as obvious over Maitra in view of Thompson, those rejections are respectfully traversed by the present response.

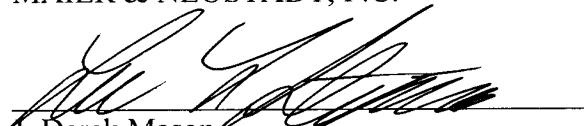
Claim 1 is amended to recite all of the features of now-canceled dependent Claim 38, which was indicated in the outstanding Office Action as reciting allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent Claim 1 and each claim depending therefrom patentably distinguishes over any proper combination of the cited references. Claims 2-4, 22, 25, 32, and 41 were also indicated as reciting allowable subject

matter and are amended to be in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2-4, 22, 25, 32, and 41 and any claims depending therefrom are in condition for allowance.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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